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Production and Marketing Administration
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Reserve

Potato Fact Sheet

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Heavy Supply of Excellent Potatoes

A heavy supply of top-quality intermediate crop potatoes will be available to consumers during August and until about the middle of September. Peak supply will be around August 12 to 22.

This situation is indicated by the favorable field conditions which, having contributed to a large early crop, are doing equally well with the intermediate crop.

Eat as Many as We Can

With such a large and fine quality crop available, homemakers, food service establishments, and others should continue to do everything to help utilize this excellent and nourishing food. Therefore, special efforts will be made during August — with particular emphasis on the period August 12 to 21, inclusive — to help move most of these potatoes into consumer channels. Producers, members of the distributive trades, farm organizations, and others will cooperate with the Department of Agriculture in the program. As in the case of the early varieties, the chief emphasis in the merchandizing effort will be directed toward increasing consumption of the high quality potatoes, and will be based on the fact that these potatoes constitute one of the "better buys" on today's food market.

Diversion Outlook

Like the earlier varieties, the midsummer crop is more perishable than the later crops. It cannot be stored except for a very short period. Excess potatoes — those not absorbed by normal market outlets — will have to be diverted primarily to the manufacture of meal, flour, starch, livestock feed, and alcohol.

The Department of Agriculture, under its mandatory price-supporting operations will attempt to keep the lower grades of potatoes out of domestic food channels and make the top grades available to consumers.

Where They're Coming From

During August, the Eastern markets will be supplied chiefly from New Jersey, Long Island, and the Connecticut Valley. In these areas, production is estimated at 35.2 million bushels -- compared with 28.5 million last year.

The Far West is supplied by the State of Washington and the early sections of Idaho and Oregon, where the Bliss Triumph, White Rose and Russet Burbank varieties are grown. Separate production figures for these areas are not available, but it appears that production will be 10 to 20 percent higher than last year, when supply and demand were in approximate balance.

In the central part of the country, supplies come from farms scattered throughout the area, except in the more northern portions. This area is expected to produce about the same volume of potatoes as was marketed through commercial channels last year.

Large Late Crop Forecast, Too

While immediate concern is with the marketing of the intermediate crop, United States Department of Agriculture advance estimates show that a plentiful late crop is also probable this year. The total of the two crops would be larger than last year's production.

This fact is further reason to get as much as possible of the intermediate crop into the hands of consumers as soon as possible. It is imperative that the program get under way at once in order to help make room for the late crop.

What You Can Do

This program to move the potato crop, in order to be successful, calls for the full cooperation of all groups concerned, from producers through channels of trade to consumers. The ways in which each can help have been outlined before, but are restated here for emphasis:

Producer

By shipping potatoes of uniform size and grade. By sending to market only the high quality potatoes with "eye appeal."

Restaurants

By featuring potatoes — by serving them more often in more ways.

Wholesaler

By getting more potatoes into retail outlets prior to and during the peak potato movement.

Allied Industries

By assisting in promoting the sale of potatoes through all means and media available.

Retailer

By attractively displaying potatoes and marketing them efficiently. Also by putting special emphasis on larger than normal quantities, and better quality.

Homemaker

By serving more potatoes more often in more ways.

MERCHANDISING AIDS

Educational and promotional aids to assist in obtaining the greatest utilization possible of these potatoes during the peak period of their movement will include suggested material for house organs and for stuffers to be used by public utilities and other organizations, and suggestions for newspaper and radio advertisements.

Complete service will be given the press and radio, and full use will be made of the Department's information facilities.

